

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CAIRO 10956 301824Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----011614 301826Z /43

O 301525Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6792
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T CAIRO 10956

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT PARA 2)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR MASS EG SY ET SO UR
SUBJECT: ALLEGED EGYPTIAN/SUDANESE PLAN SEND TROOPS TO HORN OF AFRICA

REF: MOGADISCIO 1098

1. WE CAN OBVIOUSLY GIVE NO CATEGORIC DENIAL, BUT ZAWAHRY'S
STORY THAT GOE HAD AGREED TO DISPATCH 12,000 TROOPS TO SOMALIA
STRIKES US AS FAR-FETCHED.

2. LARGELY BECAUSE OF HIS ANTI-EPMG ATTITUDE, SADAT HAS INDEED
BEEN WILLING ASSIST SOMALIA IN MILITARY FIELD. AS REPORTED
ELSEWHERE, HE HAS SENT SMALL ARMS AND AMMO (AND PERHAPS SOME
T-34 TANKS) TO SOMALIA. HE CLAIMS VALUE OF ARM DELIVERIES
TO DATE TOTALS \$13 MILLION, NOT \$25 MILLION (CAIRO 10389).
HOWEVER, EXACT VALUE IS HARDLY IMPORTANT. WHILE NOTHING HAS
BEEN SAID TO US ABOUT DISPATCHING "COMMANDO" INSTRUCTORS TO
SOMALIA, THIS COULD WELL BE THE CASE. APART FROM
ZAIRIAN CASE, WHEN SADAT TOLD US OF EGYPTIAN MILITARY

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TEAM THAT WAS BEING SENT, GOE HAS NOT TOLD US ABOUT
EGYPTIAN MILITARY TEAMS TO CHAD OR ELSEWHERE. 250
SUCH "COMMANDO" INSTRUCTORS SEEMS A BIT HIGH,
BUT IS POSSIBLE.

3. DISPATCH OF 12,000 TROOPS (EQUIVALENT TO A DIVI-
SION) IS LESS PLAUSIBLE. WITH CURRENT EGYPTIAN CONCERN

ABOUT INTENTIONS OF BEGIN GOVERNMENT IN ISRAEL AND RECENT HEIGHTENED EGYPTIAN/LIBYAN TENSIONS, WE FIND IT DIFFICULT BELIEVE THAT GAMASY WOULD AGREE TO DISPATCH OF SUCH A LARGE NUMBER OF TROOPS TO SOMALIA AT THIS TIME. SO FAR AS GAMASY IS CONCERNED, SOMALIA AND MOST OTHER AFRICAN AREAS--EXCEPT FOR THE SUDAN--ARE IRRELEVANT SIDE SHOWS IN TERMS OF EGYPT'S SECURITY PERIMETER. IF INSTRUCTED TO DO SO BY SADAT, AS HAS BEEN THE CASE IN THE PAST, GAMASY WILL RELUCTANTLY SEND MILITARY MISSIONS, BUT WE WOULD EXPECT HIM PUT UP STRONG FIGHT AGAINST ANY SIZEABLE DEPLOYMENT OF FORCES. HE WOULD ARGUE THIS IN TERMS OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY THREAT IS SINAI AND LIBYAN BORDER RESPECTIVELY AND THAT DEPLOYMENT TO SOMALIA FRONT WOULD SIMPLY FRITTER AWAY TROOP RESOURCES BADLY NEEDED FOR EGYPT'S IMMEDIATE DEFENSE. CONCEPT THAT EGYPTIAN TROOPS WOULD BE USED IN OGADEN AND/OR ERITREA ALSO SEEMS FAR FETCHED.

4. THERE HAVE, OF COURSE, BEEN REPORTS FOR SOME TIME THAT ANYWHERE FROM 5 TO 15 THOUSAND EGYPTIAN TROOPS HAVE BEEN DEPLOYED TO THE SUDAN. HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN NO CONFIRMATION OF THESE REPORTS AND WE ARE SKEPTICAL ABOUT THEIR CORRECTNESS. SMALL ARMS, MILITARY MISSIONS AND EVEN A FEW ANTONOV AIRCRAFT HAVE IN THE PAST BEEN DEPLOYED TO SUDAN. SADAT HAS ALSO MADE IT CLEAR THAT ANY ATTACK ON THE SUDAN WOULD
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BE A CAUSUS BELLI FOR EGYPT. HOWEVER, SENDING TROOPS TO THE SUDAN FOR USE IN ERITREA IS, IN OUR JUDGMENT, A DIFFERENT MATTER AND NOT LIKELY TO BE CONGENIAL TO GOE LEADERSHIP.

5. CANNOT ACCOUNT FOR ZAWAHRY STORY, BUT HE WOULD NOT BE THE FIRST EGYPTIAN FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER TO PROVIDE WRONG INFORMATION ON HIS GOVERNMENT'S INTENTIONS. IT IS NOT THE PRACTICE OF GOE TO KEEP ITS MISSIONS ABROAD WELL INFORMED.

6. STILL, WITH ALL OF THE ABOVE SAID, WE SHARE MOGADISCIO'S VIEW THAT REPORT OUGHT TO BE CHECKED OUT.
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Message Attributes

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